

William Woodward House
22 James Street
Providence, Rhode Island

HABS No. 27

HABS
RI,
4-PROV,
31-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
Philip D. Creer, District Officer
14 College Street, Providence, R. I.

WILLIAM WOODWARD HOUSE

HABS
RI,
4-PROV,
31-

Address: 22 James Street, Providence, Providence County,
Rhode Island.
PLAT 16, LOT 114

An addendum to
Woodward House
22 James Street
Providence, Rhode Island
in HABS Catalog (1941)

Present Owner
and Occupant: Mr. and Mrs. Phineas Sprague

Present Use: Dwelling

Brief Statement
of Significance: This is a typical example of a medium size, two-
and-a-half-story, brick house of the 1820's.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History

1. Original and subsequent owners:

- 1796 Christopher Arnold division from his father, James Arnold.
- 1824 Christopher Arnold sells to William Woodward, Jr., for \$640 a lot of land on the S side of James Street. Bounded E/ly by Benjamin Clifford; S/ly by land formerly owned by Col. John S. Burr and J--- Patten Gibbs; W/ly on land owned by William Smith. Deed Book 49, page 215, in Providence City Hall.
- 1828 William Woodward and William Woodward, Jr., lived here. . . Providence Directory. He lived here until he died in 1853.
- 1853 William Woodward made will (William G. R. Mowry Exec) "to my well beloved wife, Jane H. for life, as long as she remains my widow, sole use and improvements. . . . after to my children any part of which may be sold except my homestead." Wills Book 19, page 274, in Providence City Hall.
- 1854 Property taxed to William Woodward heirs. . . . Tax Book in Providence City Hall.

- 1889 Property taxed to Martin Hogan. . . . Tax Book in Providence City Hall.
 - 1940 Home Owners Loan Corp. to Mark Plainfield for \$10,000. This property changed hands several times, and in
 - 1955 Property taxed to V. George Rustigian
 - 1955 Ex. of Mark Plainfield to V. George Rustigian for \$5,400
 - 1959 Rustigian sells to Phineas Sprague and wife, Mary L.
- 2. Date of erection: Betwsen 1824 and 1828.
 - 3. Architect: The design of the house has been attributed to John Holden Greene, architect, apparently on stylistic grounds, by Norman Morrison Isham, John Holden Greene, unpublished mss. in possession of John Hutchins Cady, Providence, Rhode Island.
 - 4. Notes on alterations and additions: The house was in poor condition when the pressnt owners acquired it in 1959. They have renovated the entire house, and rebuilt the basement for its present use as dining room and kitchen.

Prepared by Antoinette F. Downing and Elvira Gowdey
for the Providence Preservation Society
January 1962.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement

- 1. Architectural character: This is a typical example of a medium size, two-and-a-half-story, brick house of the 1820's. Characteristic features include the hip roof with monitor, the elliptical doorway, the central hall plan, and such interior detail as the delicate main stair, and the elaborate mantelpieces.
- 2. Condition of fabric: Good; being restorsd by present owners.

B. Technical Description of Exterior

- 1. Overall dimensions: Faces north. Medium-sized rectangular house, 42' (five bays) x 40', two-and-a-half stories plus finished basement at ground level on south and west sides.

2. Foundations: Regular ashlar in front, stone in back.
3. Wall construction: Brick, running bond.
4. Stoops: Ashlar entrance stoop, iron rail.
5. Openings:
 - a. Doors: Six-panel, side lights and elliptical top light. Rear door from lower level to yard.
 - b. Window: Six over six light double hung windows, stone lintels and sills.
6. Roof:
 - a. Shape: Hip roof, low pitch.
 - b. Cornice, eaves: Molded.
 - c. Dormers, cupolas: Lighted monitor.

C. Technical Description of Interior

1. Floor Plans: Central hall four-room plan, two rooms on west side, now joined as one large parlor, children's parlor at northeast, library at southeast. Dining room in former kitchen in basement at ground level in rear; kitchen at north end of basement level; one bedroom at southeast; bath added mid-east side.
2. Stairways: Central hall divided front and rear. Front stair: open well, turned 90° at top, open string, sunburst step end ornaments, molded handrail, slender rectangular balusters, two per step, handrail scrolled around round bottom newel. Simpler rear stair, closed string, U-shape, at rear of central hall, continues to third floor.
3. Wall and ceiling finish: Plaster, papered.
4. Doors: Six-panel doors, pilaster trim with deep moldings and corner blocks. Door between front and back hallways with semicircular top light, molded arch with keystone.
5. Trim: Paneled aprons under windows, paneled folding interior shutters, molded chair rail.
6. Hardware: Miscellaneous brass hardware.

7. Lighting: Electric.
8. Heating: Four fireplaces on each floor, wood mantels with single or double colonettes at the corners, deeply projecting mantel shelves with complex moldings. Original kitchen fireplace in present dining room.

D. Site

1. Orientation: Faces north on a deep lot that slopes from east down to west, house on sidewalk line at north with yard in rear.
2. Outbuildings: New garage at southwest.
3. Driveways: Gravel drive along west side.
4. New garden and terrace being built in rear.

Prepared by Osmund R. Overby, Architect
National Park Service
December 1961.